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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-seventh session

Draft report

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Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

(*Item 4 (a)*)

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2016

1. At its 11th meeting, on 9 June 2017, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2016 (E/2017/55).

2. The Director of the secretariat of CEB introduced the report and responded to questions raised during its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Delegations welcomed the comprehensive report on the activities of CEB during 2016. Appreciation and support was widely expressed for the Board's work to promote system-wide coordination, maximize coherence, avoid duplication and optimize the use of resources in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental mandates. Delegations stressed the importance of continuing to ensure that the Board's work was guided by such mandates.

4. Similarly, it was observed that individual United Nations system entities were expected to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other intergovernmental processes within their individual institutional mandates. Delegations stressed the importance of avoiding duplication of work among United Nations organizations.

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5. Welcoming the support of the United Nations Development Group for the United Nations country teams, a delegation highlighted in particular the value of the guidelines on support for voluntary and country-led reporting on national goals. United Nations system support for Member States was also broadly appreciated. It was seen as essential that the system was "pulling in the same direction", including through the Resident Coordinator system. While acknowledging "Delivering as one" to be a positive initiative, its voluntary nature was reiterated and it was recalled that a recommendation emphasizing that point had been adopted by the Committee at its fifty-fifth session.

6. The need for the United Nations system to take measures to improve operational activities for development was emphasized by several delegations, which highlighted the role of CEB in that context. The expectation that the Board would enhance its transparency in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution through regular briefings to the Economic and Social Council (see General Assembly resolution 71/243, para. 45 (c)) was recalled.

7. It was recognized by several delegations that CEB and its subsidiary machinery were uniquely positioned to leverage the strengths and expertise of the United Nations system to realize improvements in human resources, finance, procurement and other management functions. Broad appreciation was expressed for the achievements of the High-level Committee on Management in improving efficiency in such areas. Several delegations supported continuing work on harmonization and simplification of business practices with a view to realizing further efficiencies and continuing to enhance effectiveness across the system. The hope was expressed that the Board would inform and support the Secretary-General's management reform initiatives.

8. On human resources, it was observed by a delegation that there was an opportunity for further reform, including allowing more flexible deployment of personnel across United Nations system entities and increased support for skills development. The uniform application of human resources reforms and timely implementation of decisions by the International Civil Service Commission were also called for across the system.

9. Regarding procurement, appreciation was expressed for having increased the number of registrations of vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Questions were raised concerning what other work had been undertaken by the High-level Committee on Management related to procurement during the reporting period, and also on what other categories of goods and/or services were being considered for common procurement processes, such as long-term agreements.

10. Work carried out under the auspices of CEB to facilitate information and knowledge management and to promote multilingualism was also welcomed by a delegation. More information was sought on the adoption by the Board of the Akoma Ntoso (AKN) eXtensible Markup Language (XML) standard for the United Nations documentation environment that had been developed by the High-level Committee on Management working group on document standards. The benefits of the common standard were acknowledged, including achieving efficiencies in document management and productivity gains in the translation process, as well as supporting multilingualism and greater accessibility to United Nations documents by persons with disabilities.

11. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the Board's role, through the High-level Committee on Programmes in promoting system-wide coordination in the follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits. Support was also expressed for the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes on enhancing

system-wide policy coherence. It was stated that the production of joint policy papers on cross-cutting themes was positive and should be more broadly promoted. The shared United Nations system framework for action on equality and non-discrimination and the common core principles for a United Nations system-wide approach to climate action were welcomed in particular.

12. A delegation expressed appreciation for the Board's support for enhancing the support of the United Nations system for trade and investment. Clarification was sought as to the expected timeline for the dissemination of the recommendations on how the United Nations system could best enhance the overall effectiveness of its support for enhancing the flow of foreign direct investment to the least developed countries.

13. The coordination activities in which the Board engaged with other jointly financed bodies, namely, the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Inspection Unit, were acknowledged by a delegation.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly take note of the annual overview report of CEB for 2016 (E/2017/55).**

15. **The Committee recognized the contributions of CEB throughout 2016 to enhance United Nations system-wide coherence and coordination in policy, operational and management matters.**

16. **The Committee expressed support for the continuing work of the CEB, within existing mandates, on the harmonization and simplification of business practices aimed at increasing the coherence, coordination, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system. The Committee reiterated its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to address that issue.**

17. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to include in the reports of CEB to the Committee information on actions undertaken on the wide range of programmatic, management and operational issues linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to also continue to include in the aforementioned report information on a United Nations system-wide approach to climate action within the context of the Paris Agreement.**

18. **The Committee reiterated its recommendations to the General Assembly to bring to the attention of the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, the need to ensure that the Board's activities and initiatives, including those relating to system-wide coherence, encompassed the principle of voluntary adoption of "Delivering as one" as defined in General Assembly resolution 71/243, and were fully in line with intergovernmental mandates.**

19. **The Committee recognized the continued efforts of CEB to engage with Member States, including, but not limited to, the use of its website, to further enhance and strengthen the Board's transparency and accountability to Member States.**

20. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to foster a coordinated approach to multilingualism, which was a core value of the United Nations system, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.**